

Message Text

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51

ACTION XMB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 RSR-01 /041 W

----- 016850

R 061305Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5329

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 1508

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BPRO

SUBJECT: FCIA CREDIT INSURANCE REQUEST FOR SALE TWO

RADIO TRANSMITTERS WITH ANTENNA AND

TOWER TO SWAZILAND COMMERCIAL RADIO PTY. LTD.

REF: A) STATE 152858; B) MBABANE 1183 C) MBABANE 0332 NOTAL

D) JOHANNESBURG 0155

1. EMBASSY MBABANE HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF SALE BEYOND
INFORMATION THAT IT WAS TO TAKE PLACE, AS REPORTED
REFTEL B.

2. EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO REASON WHY EXIMBANK SHOULD NOT
CONSIDER REQUEST. COMPANY, WHICH WAS SUBJECT OF FAVORABLE
WTDR PREPARED BY CONGEN JOHANNESBURG (REFTEL D), IS PART
OF HOLDINGS OF NATHAN KIRSH WHO OWNS EXTENSIVE ASSETS
SWAZILAND. SWAZILAND COMMERCIAL RADIO, AFTER SOME EARLIER
DIFFICULTIES, NOW APPEARS BE TAKING HOLD AND IS REPORTEDLY
WIDELY POPULAR AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN AUDIENCE TO WHICH
IT IS EXCLUSIVELY BEAMED FROM LOCATION ON SWAZILAND BORDER.
RECENT SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS REPORTS TELL OF EXPANDED
OPERATIONS AND HIRING OF TWO POPULAR RADIO PERSONALITIES
FROM SABC. STATION IS NOT RPT NOT RECEIVABLE IN SWAZILAND.

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3. EMBASSY PRESUMES, HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT RECALLS

EXTENDED STRUGGLE OVER OWNERSHIP OF RADIO INVOLVING AMCIT MARK WODLINGER (METROMEDIA, KANSAS CITY) WHO WAS ORIGINAL ENTREPRENEUR AND OWNER UNTIL SQUEEZED OUT BY KIRSH IN 1972. WODLINGER VISITED SWAZILAND AS RECENTLY AS FEBRUARY 1973, ARMED WITH CONGRESSIONAL LETTERS, IN ATTEMPT GET GOS RCE#SWAZI RADIO(READ NATHAN KIRSH) FULFILL TERMS OF 15YEAR CONTRACT WITH MUSICO, A NEVADA CORPORATION WHOLLY OWNED BY WODLINGER, TO SUPPLY MUSIC TAPES AT FIXED MONTHLY RATE. WODLINGER WAS UNSUCCESSFUL IN HIS EFFORTS (REPORTED REFTEL C) AND DEPARTED SWAZILAND EMBITTERED, THREATENING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST KIRSH IN SWAZILAND AS WELL AS POLITICAL ACTION IN USA AGAINST SWAZILAND'S SUGAR QUOTA.

4. IN LIGHT OF PARA 3, THEREFORE, IT LIKELY THAT FAVORABLE EXIM/FCIA CONSIDERATION TO SALE WOULD CAUSE CONSTERNATION TO WODLINGER SHOULD HE BECOME APPRISED OF IT. NEVERTHELESS, EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO RPT NOT POLITICAL OR BUSINESS REASONS INTERNAL TO SWAZILAND WHY EXIM SHOULD NOT CONSIDER REQUEST.

5. DEPARTMENT CAN OBTAIN ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON WODLINGER-KIRSH STRUGGLE IF DESIRED, FROM DOLS (AF/S) OR CHARGE SPICER WHO PRESENTLY IN U. S. ON R&R. MCCONNELL

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED. WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST.

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Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS MC CONNELL
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ISecure: 1
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